



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FISHERIES ENTER MID-WINTER LULL WITH MOST SUPPLIES ADEQUATE

Adequate supplies of most fish and shellfish are foreseen for the next three months, despite the seasonal lull experienced by the Nation's commercial fishing industry.

This is reported in the Commercial Fisheries Outlook of January-March, 1957, a quarterly publication of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior, issued this week.

Other highlights of the "Outlook" report are: oysters will be in their prime and in demand; Pacific Coast dungeness crab will be in good supply; imports, frozen stocks, and canned supplies plus some fishing, which will continue despite winter storms, will keep most supplies adequate.

The report points out that, because of a number of promotional and educational campaigns conducted in 1956, the buying public should be better informed on matters pertaining to food fish in 1957; also that the late Lenten season may have a strengthening effect upon the demand.

The eastern oyster industry, still not fully recovered from the hurricane damage of recent years, will be active during the quarter but will probably not be able to meet the demand. Pacific oyster producers have met unusually heavy demands this season from soup and stew packers. Even with new oyster beds coming into production in California the industry will be pushed to satisfy consumers.

Shrimp landings in the Gulf picked up in October but November storms cut production considerably. Imports during the quarter will be substantial but will probably not be as high as during last winter. Cold storage supplies are lower but probably sufficient. Canned supplies are about the same as a year ago.

Salmon, largely because of the 25 percent increase in the Alaska catch during the 1956 season, is in better supply than a year ago, but is far from being plentiful. Cold storage holdings are higher and mild cured supplies are lower. Canned salmon supplies are somewhat higher than a year ago. Imports of fresh salmon from Japan and Canada were lower in recent months but canned salmon imports were considerably higher.

Swordfish, whiting and Maine sardine supplies are moderate but tuna and California mackerel stocks are heavy. Halibut is in good supply because of a good seasonal catch. Haddock and ocean perch supplies are liberal, with cod, pollock, flounder and sole stocks moderate.

Fish sticks, the first fishery product to bear the U. S. shield and grade label, are available in greater quantities and are meeting an increased demand.

The demand for clams and lobsters is good and the amounts available light; sea scallops are available and the market is firm.

Copies of the Commercial Fisheries Outlook, January-March, 1957, Fishery Leaflet 336 ee, may be obtained by writing to the Division of Information, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

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